



This issue of the *Knight Letter* sees a change of editor and printer, but no major alteration of course. Our policy, as before, will be to chronicle events and items of Carrollian interest, rather than to harangue or exhort our readers. One small exhortation is, however, perhaps in order at this juncture. Unlike his all-seeing predecessor, your new editor is a distant inhabitant of Outland - an obscure region at the far end of the Lincoln Tunnel - where his opportunities for news-gathering are inevitably limited. Like the unfortunate Banker, he needs your indulgence and help. So ply him generously, therefore, with jam and judicious advice. Set him conundrums to guess. Above all, keep him abreast of what is happening in your own neighborhood. For, if you fail to do so, not only will his tones become mimsy and his face black; the chances are that the next *Letter* you receive will be a perfect and absolute blank.

The *Wasp in a Wig* saga continued throughout the summer, involving the members of the Publications Committee — notably Martin Gardner, Stan Marx, David and Maxine Schaefer, Morton Cohen and Edward Guiliano — in an immense amount of hard work. As in all such enterprises, there were crises, complications and delays, extending even to the delivery of the books, when — in an improbable last-minute hitch — some 742 boxes, all carefully packed, with the names printed clearly on each, were found not to have the *right* names on them... But that is all over now, and we hope that everyone is at last satisfied. To all who gnashed their teeth and gnawed their fingernails so patiently, our apologies; and to all concerned with the production, including the designers and craftsmen of the Angelica Press, our congratulations and thanks.

*Lewis Carroll Observed* has by now had a number of reviews, mostly short, but virtually all appreciative. Although no two critics seem agreed upon the respective merits of individual essays, there is unanimous praise for the quality of the illustrations, and for the general appearance of the book.

#### □ One Puzzle Solved, Another Posed

Roger Lancelyn Green, in his essay on Carroll's "The Ligniad" in *Lewis Carroll Observed*, expresses some puzzlement over two references in the poem to the name *Scapula*. As Green observes,

It is mentioned as a companion to Ainsworth's *Dictionary*, and must be a book, since there is also the reference to a "flyleaf of Scapula." It may have been some Greek lexicon preceding Liddell and Scott. (p. 83)

Although Green was unable to discover such a book, August A. Imholtz, Jr. has done so, and confirms that this conjecture is correct. Johann Scapula, a 16th century German-Swiss scholar and printer, worked under Henri Estienne (or Stephens) on the monumental *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (1572). In Basel in 1579, much to the disgust of his former mentor, Scapula produced a one-volume *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* which was based almost entirely on Estienne's work. (The *English Cyclopaedia* says of it that "instead of gaining him credit, it has drawn upon him the just and severe censure of all honest men.") Nevertheless, it proved very useful to students, and went through many editions over the next three centuries. The London quarto edition of 1820 (or the Glasgow, of 1816) may have been used by George Girdlestone Woodhouse (in whose honor the "Ligniad" was written) when he was at Oxford in the early 1850's.

A more difficult matter to explain, in Imholtz's opinion, is the reference to the lost plays of Euripides (all 73 of them). Why Euripides? Green assumes a topical allusion here, which may be correct. But can any reader say what it is, or think of a better answer?

## □ Press Clippings

The *Montgomery Journal* of July 28th carried a feature article, "Alice is 112 years old, but she's alive and well in Silver Spring", in which David and Maxine Schaefer were interviewed by Laura Way. Prompted by the *Wasp* furore, the article gives a generally accurate account of the origins and activities of the LCSNA, spiced with information on Carroll and salty one-liners from the Schaefers. Commendations to all concerned on an interesting piece, which keeps the record more than usually straight.

The Monroesville, Pa. Public Library celebrated its 10th birthday last April with a six-week display of Carrolliana entitled "Alice: Selections from the Wonderland of Alice Berkey". Translations of *Alice* in some 30 languages were on show, plus a varied assemblage of graphics, games and figurines, all elegantly captioned in Mrs. Berkey's own impeccable hand. An undated, unidentified report in the *Monroesville Gazette Extraordinary* (be its real name what it may) conveys a pleasing impression of this exhibit, though — as Alice puts it — "a liddell befuddled" as to its facts.

From the *London Times* of July 2nd: "A photograph taken by Lewis Carroll of Alice Liddell as a beggar girl brought £ 5,000 at Sotheby's (estimate £750 to £ 1,500). That is the highest price ever paid at auction for one of his photographs, but it is generally considered the best he ever took of Alice, and the negative was torn at an early date."

William Warren Bartley's masterly edition and reconstruction of *Lewis Carroll's Symbolic Logic* (Potter 1977) had the honor of a lengthy review in the *London Times Literary Supplement* of August 26th, by Willard Van Orman Quine. Professor Quine, of Harvard, is the *doyen* of American logicians, and his eminently fair, though searching, appraisal of Carroll's logical achievement will be of great interest to the learned minority who have cultivated the subject — though somewhat reminiscent of the Mouse's history lesson to the ignorant majority who have not.

"A Ceremony of Carrolls" (*Virginia Quarterly Review*, July) is a review article by Peter Heath, in which John Pudney's *LC and His World*, Jean Gattegno's *LC: Fragments of a Looking - Glass* the *Rectory Magazine* facsimile, *LC Observed* and Francis Huxley's *The Raven and the Writing - Desk* are variously applauded and abused.

Our publication of *The Wasp in a Wig* was neatly (and legitimately) scooped by the *London Telegraph Sunday Magazine* (No. 51, September 4th), which gave it the full treatment: Cover illustration, after Tenniel, by Ralph Steadman; two further illustrations (in his own manner) by Steadman, and others in color by Sir Hugh Casson, Patrick Procktor, and Peter Blake; the complete facsimile text of the episode; and an accompanying article, with photographs, by Morton Cohen. Rumor has it that the piece has since been reprinted by the *Toronto Globe and Mail* and *Montreal Star*, and may soon be appearing in the *Smithsonian Magazine*. Further news of these or other such publications would be greatly appreciated, if anyone has chanced to see them.

*Punch*, incidentally, lost no time at all in following up this story. "Publish and be Diblgl!", by Alan Coren (September 14th) is a naughtily satirical piece, in which Mr. Dodgson is advised by the Junior Porter of Christ Church to forget about "wiggy wasps" and *Through the Looking-Glass*, and to concentrate instead on marketing *Through the Telescope* — his privily taken snapshots of the local schoolgirls at play.....



Morton Cohen is at it again in "Alice Under Ground" (*N.Y. Times Book Review*, October 9th), which recounts yet another curious discovery: that the tiny photograph of Alice Liddell at the end of the world-famous manuscript copy conceals a pen-and-ink sketch of her (reproduced in the article), which Carroll presumably thought inadequate, and decided to replace. Though its presence had been rumored in the Dodgson family, and long ago noted without comment at the British Museum, it was not until Morton raised the matter that the photograph was finally removed, and the long-lost portrait saw the light of day.

[Further contributions to this section will be particularly welcomed by the Editor, who will also do his best to supply copies of the smaller individual items to those who request them.]

#### □ **Snark Loose in New York**

During the last two weeks of August the Nettle Creek Players presented nine performances of *The Snark was a Boojum*, you see at the Nat Horne Musical Theatre in New York. "Based on the dual life of Lewis Carroll/Charles Dodgson", the play was written by Jeff Duteil with music by Stan Smith, and directed by Ron Wachholtz.

The two-act play does not pretend to biography or analysis, and takes dramatic liberties with the facts. It is a series of sketches that illuminate various facets of the subject's nature. Decorous scenes of Dodgson's relations with real people such as John Tenniel, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and his fellow dons are interspersed with cavortings by colorful and ebullient Wonderland characters, who galumph down the aisle or appear suddenly at the back of the stage. All are woven together by the charming music, mainly played on the piano by Scott Smith, and ably sung by the cast. Effective use is made of Carroll's beloved music boxes.

The stage portrayal of a famous personage demands of the audience even more than the usual suspension of disbelief. When that personage is as enigmatic as Lewis Carroll the suspension comes dangerously close to impossible. It is a pleasure to report that Chuck Shallenberg achieved it immediately for this old Carrollian. He not only bears a striking resemblance to the photographs of Carroll, but also finds a voice and manner that must have come from long and sympathetic study of the subject.

According to the program, "about half the company members are students earning college credits in theatre and music through the company's affiliates, Wayne State College in Nebraska and Ball State University in Indiana." All performed admirably, especially Ed Havlovic as Christopher Pidgeon and Katie Higgins, a musical student at the University of Cincinnati, who suggested the legendary magic of Ellen Terry.

The setting, lighting, and costumes all devised by the company, are appropriately imaginative. Congratulations, Nettle Creek Players!

D.F.R.

#### □ **A Life Refurbished**

*LEWIS CARROLL: An Illustrated Biography*, by Derek Hudson. (New York: Clarkson N. Potter / Crown. 1977. Pp. 272. Price \$12.95).

First published in 1954, Derek Hudson's *Lewis Carroll* has long been recognized as the sanest and most reliable of modern biographies. The only wonder is that it should have taken so long to reach a Second Edition, and that this should be its first appearance in the United States. Apart from a new introduction, a by no means exhaustive bibliography, and a few small corrections of fact, the main changes appear to be visual. The sober lay-out and sparse illustrations of the original have been replaced by a trendy and unattractive typography, whose narrow margins are embellished with a riotous assemblage of vignettes from Tenniel, Carroll himself, and many other sources. The effect is that of an ill-designed coffee-table book, but those who purchase it as such will at least find solid reading in the text, while those who dislike its appearance can at any rate be thankful that a work of such quality is again available in print.

#### □ **New Photographs by Lewis Carroll**

For three weeks beginning September 20th the Helios Gallery in New York held an exhibition of photographs by Lewis Carroll, featuring eighteen pictures of Ellen Terry and her family taken in 1865. Most interesting, perhaps, is a family group showing Ellen with her parents, three younger sisters and one brother, and an unidentified little girl. Even with

today's fast films it would be very difficult to equal the graceful composition and the relaxed expressions of these eight charming people. The other photographs are full length portraits of one or two members of the family in Carroll's characteristic manner. Some are in theatrical costumes and appropriate poses. There is one large picture of Ellen as a suppliant, appealingly dramatic without sentimentality.

The pictures were made from "previously unknown...and recently discovered glass negatives," but no further information was available about their provenance. The prints were made by Richard Benson on printing-out paper fixed with gold chloride, which gives them the physical quality of prints made by Carroll or under his supervision. Mr. Benson has seen fit to present the whole image area of every picture, revealing the numbers carefully scratched on the plates for identification; and, in some cases, the means by which Carroll created his backgrounds — as, for example, by attaching a blanket to a brick wall. To see these raw, uncropped photographs is to be forcibly struck with the brilliance — surely both intuitive and artful — of the cropping by which Carroll gave his pictures their emotional and aesthetic significance.

D.F.R.

□ "...not an atom of meaning in it."

Aside from the title, a few snatches of verse, and a tolerably alarming monster, the British-made *Jabberwocky* is a movie of no Carrollian interest, being merely an excuse for mock-mediaeval horseplay in the manner of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. Michael Palin is the cowardly anti-hero who gets undeserved credit for dragon-slaying, and is compelled to trade in his horrible girl-friend for a princess who does not attract him in the least. Against the authentically beautiful backdrop of Chepstow Castle, a large, dirty-faced cast of assorted peasants, caitiffs and varlets puts on a frantic display of overacting, in the effort to bring life of some sort to a leaden and boorish script. But since nobody is given anything even faintly amusing to say or do, the attempt is hopeless, and *Jabberwocky* drops dead of its own silliness long before the final *coup de grace*.

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